

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Notice of Allowability | Application No. | Applicant(s) | |
| | 10/024,455 | YANG ET AL. | |
| | Examiner | Art Unit | |
| | Patrick J. Connolly | 2877 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to 30 December 2004.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-38.
3. The drawings filed on 31 July 2002 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some* c) None of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

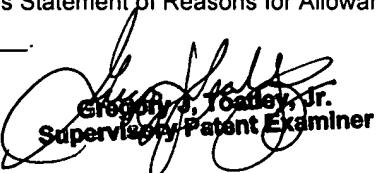
* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.



Gregory J. Tooley, Jr.
Supervisory Patent Examiner

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-38 allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

As to claim 1, the prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, fails to disclose or render obvious a method of measuring an optical distance including: directing low-coherence light of three wavelengths along two optical paths; detecting combinations of the first and second and second and third of said wavelengths in order to measure phase changes of light interacting with a medium to be measured; superposing said phase changes to determine phase crossing points; and determining optical distance by counting the number of continuous interference fringes between said crossing points, in combination with the rest of the limitations of claim 1.

As to claim 8, the prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, fails to disclose or render obvious a method for measuring an optical distance including: providing a first and second signal generated by a first low-coherence light source and a third signal generated by a second light source, the first and second light sources being harmonically related; determining a first heterodyne signal from the first and third signal and a second heterodyne signal from the second and third signal; and determining the phase relationship between said first and second heterodyne signals to obtain the optical distance, in combination with the rest of the limitations of claim 8.

As to claim 12, the prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, fails to disclose or render obvious a system for measuring optical distance including: a first low-coherence light source that generates a first and second signal; a second light source that generates a third signal,

the light source generating harmonically related signals; a processor that determines a phase relationship between two heterodyne signals to obtain optical distance, said heterodyne signals comprised of said first and third signal, and said second and third signal, in combination with the rest of the limitations of claim 12.

As to claim 30, the prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, fails to disclose or render obvious a method of measuring a characteristic of biological tissue including: providing a first and second signal generated by a first low-coherence light source and a third signal generated by a second light source, the first and second light sources being harmonically related; determining a first heterodyne signal from the first and third signal and a second heterodyne signal from the second and third signal; and determining the phase relationship between said first and second heterodyne signals to obtain the characteristic of the biological tissue, in combination with the rest of the limitations of claim 30.

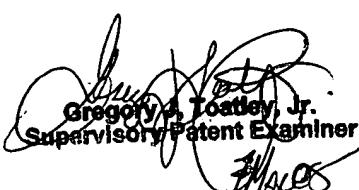
Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Patrick J. Connolly whose telephone number is 571.272.2412. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00 am - 7:00 pm Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gregory J. Toatley, Jr. can be reached on 571.272.2800 ext. 77. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

pjc:jtc
03.01.2005



Gregory J. Toatley, Jr.
Supervisory Patent Examiner
J. Toatley